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District of Arizona*
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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 1, 2000

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TEN INDICTED AND NINE ARRESTED ON FIREARMS CHARGES

TUCSON, ARIZONA -- Agents from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms and officers from the Tucson Police Department, arrested six individuals, yesterday, on a variety of weapons charges. Of the remaining four defendants, one was already in custody, another was arrested in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, another was arrested in Colorado, and one has not yet been arrested. On January 6, 2000, a federal grand jury returned an indictment charging the defendants with Conspiracy to Illegally Sell and Transport Firearms, Illegal Transportation and Sale of a Firearm, Possession of a Firearm by a Convicted Felon, Possession of a Stolen Firearm, Transportation of a Stolen Firearm, and Possession and Transfer of a Machine Gun.

The individuals charged in the indictment are: **DELBERT IRVING WADE**, Denver, Colorado; **KENNETH TUCKER**, Tucson, Arizona; **CHRISTOPHER RADCLIFF**, Tucson, Arizona; **ANTHONY PERALTA**, Tucson, Arizona; **NICHOLAS PERALTA**, Tucson, Arizona; **MIKE LE BLANC**, Tucson, Arizona; **EUGENE PIETSCH (A.K.A. BUTCH LE BLANC)**, Tucson, Arizona; **CHRISTOPHER PRESTON**, Jamesville, Wisconsin; **BRADLEY HOLDEN**, Columbus, Ohio; **AND RAYMOND BRUCE**, Tucson, Arizona.

The indictment alleges that none of the above named defendants are licensed importers, manufacturers, dealers, or collectors of firearms. It is also alleged that **WADE** and **TUCKER** negotiated to sell weapons to undercover agents. **TUCKER** told the undercover agents that the weapons they were selling had been stolen, by them, in home burglaries and "rip-offs" of drug dealers. At various times, **WADE** and **TUCKER** arranged for

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RADCLIFF, ANTHONY PERALTA, NICHOLAS PERALTA, MIKE LE BLANC, EUGENE PIETSCH, PRESTON, HOLDEN, and BRUCE to meet with the undercover “buyer” to complete the sale of the weapon or weapons. **WADE** and **TUCKER** were paid for arranging the transaction. The weapons were sold for less than half of their market value. Several of the weapons sold by the defendants, to the undercover agents, were reported as stolen. Since October 15, 1998, the defendants sold a variety of weapons to the undercover agents including, machine guns, rifles, hand guns, shotguns, and semi-automatic rifles.

CHRISTOPHER PRESTON was arrested in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and **NICHOLAS PERRALTA** was already in custody, in Pima County, on unrelated charges. **PRESTON** had his initial appearance in Milwaukee yesterday and **DELBERT IRVING WADE** was arrested in Colorado and will have his initial appearance today. The remaining defendants are scheduled to appear in federal district court in Tucson, Arizona, at 2:00 p.m. today. **BRADLEY HOLDEN** has not yet been arrested.

The indictment is a culmination of a year and a half investigation that is part of the ATF’s Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative which is designed to identify and prevent the sale of guns to juveniles.

An indictment is simply the method by which a person is charged with criminal activity and an individual’s guilt is only established upon conviction.

The maximum penalty for each charge is 10 years imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, or both (per count).

The investigation that led to the indictment was conducted by agents from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms and officers from the Tucson Police Department. The prosecution is being handled by the United States Attorney’s Office, District of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona.

**SPECIAL AGENT LARRY BETTENDORF WILL BE IN TUCSON AND
AVAILABLE FOR QUESTIONS AT 520-670-4725 OR ON PAGER AT 1-888-520-5519.**

RELEASE #: 2000-028

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